



News Release

For Immediate Release:

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Bicycle Patrols Planned in Effort to Reduce Carnage on Utah Roads

*Utah Departments of Health, Transportation and Public Safety
Look for Dangerous Drivers, Cyclists*

(Salt Lake City, UT) – In the world of bicycles vs. cars, bicycles nearly always lose. Each year in Utah, an average of 900 bicyclists are badly hurt and six are killed in crashes with cars.

In an effort to help cyclists and motorists share the road safely, the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) is launching a pilot safety project - “Bicycle Safety Enforcement Actions (BSEAs)” - in partnership with the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), the Utah Department of Public Safety’s Highway Safety Office (HSO) and with law enforcement agencies in Northern Utah. For the next two months, police officers and sheriff’s deputies will patrol the streets looking for drivers and cyclists who break the law.

The enforcement program was made possible through a grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. UDOH, UDOT and the HSO chose the pilot project because of Utah’s consistently high bicycle-motor vehicle death rate. For the years 1994-2003, Utah ranked 11th highest in the nation for bicyclist deaths.

“We know many people don’t even realize there are strict laws outlining how drivers and bike riders must share the road,” said Theron Jeppson, BSEA project manager, UDOH. “For example, it’s not well-known that bikes are considered vehicles and cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as motorists,” he said. “Bicyclists can basically ride on any road they choose, as long as they are riding with traffic and obeying the law.”

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Beginning June 10, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County and Taylorsville City officers will be present in high-traffic areas where bike crashes occur. Undercover officers will ride bikes in traffic while fellow officers watch for drivers who are speeding, crowding cyclists off the edge of the road, and failing to yield at stop signs and red lights.

The other important part of the operation is watching for cyclists as well.

“We know cyclists can be just as guilty of breaking the law,” said Mark Panos, HSO. “They run red lights, change course without warning and, most dangerous of all, ride against traffic. Having these officers actively looking for violations is a great opportunity to stop drivers and cyclists and teach them how to be safer just by obeying the law,” Panos said.

Violations officers will look for include:

Motorists

- Failure to yield right-of-way
- Failure to stop at stop signs/lights
- Illegal turns
- Speeding
- Improper passing

Bicyclists

- Failure to yield right-of-way
- Failure to stop at stop signs/lights
- Illegal turns
- Riding against the flow of traffic

Officers will have the choice of ticketing or warning violators based on severity, and will give everyone they stop a new “Share the Road” guide that outlines laws and offers safety tips.

For information about bicycle safety, call the UDOH at 801-538-6864 or visit:

www.health.utah.gov/vipp/index.html.

Editors note: The locations and dates of the Bicycle Safety Enforcement Actions are listed in the attachment and are subject to change without notice. The media are invited to cover any of the operations and share this information with the public.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.

2005 Bicycle Safety Enforcement Actions Program

The locations and dates of the Bicycle Safety Enforcement Actions (BSEA) are listed below and are subject to change without notice. The media are invited to cover any of the operations.

Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office

• Friday, June 10	4:00-9:00 PM	Big Cottonwood Canyon
• Thursday, June 18	4:00-9:00 PM	Little Cottonwood Canyon
• Wednesday, June 29	4:00-9:00 PM	Wasatch Boulevard
• Friday, July 8	4:00-9:00 PM	Millcreek Canyon
• Monday, July 11	4:00-9:00 PM	Wasatch Boulevard
• Saturday, July 16	7:00 AM-12:00 PM	Big Cottonwood Canyon

Salt Lake City Police Department

• Tuesday, June 14	4:30-9:30 PM	Citywide
• Wednesday, June 15	10:00 AM-3:00 PM	Downtown area w/ bike-lane

Taylorsville City Police Department

• Friday, June 3	1:00-500 PM	2700 West; 4100 S to 6200 S
• Friday, June 10	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	4015 West; 4700 S to 6200 S
• Monday, June 13	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	3200 West; 4700 S to 5600 S
• Thursday, June 16	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	4015 West; 4700 S to 6200 S
• Friday, June 17	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	2700 West; 4100 S to 6200 S
• Friday, June 24	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	3200 West; 4700 S to 6200 S
• Monday, June 27	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	2200 West; 4100 S to 5400 S
• Tuesday, June 28	TBD	4015 West; 4700 S to 6200 S
• Thursday, June 30	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	3200 West; 4700 S to 6200 S
• Tuesday, July 5	TBD	3600 West; 4700 S to 5600 S
• Friday, July 8	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	2700 West; 4100 S to 6200 S
• Tuesday, July 12	TBD	4015 West; 4700 S to 6200 S
• Friday, July 15	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	2700 West; 4100 S to 6200 S
• Tuesday, July 19	TBD	3200 West; 4700 S to 6200 S
• Friday, July 22	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	2200 West; 4100 S to 5400 S
• Tuesday, July 26	TBD	3600 West; 4700 S to 5600 S
• Friday, July 29	8:00 AM-12:00 PM	3200 West; 4700 S to 6200 S

For more information on the BSEA program, please call:

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